

# The Goodland Daily News

TUESDAY

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2000

50¢

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Goodland, Kansas 67735

## weather report

46°  
at noon



### Today

• Sunset, 4:44 p.m.

### Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 7:06 a.m.

• Sunset, 4:45 p.m.

### Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 32 degrees

• Humidity 35 percent

• Sky partly cloudy

• Winds southwest 22 mph

• Barometer 29.78 inches

and falling

• Record High 69° (1986)

• Record Low -17° (1963)

### Last 24 Hours\*

High 49°

Low 19°

Precipitation none

### Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Partly cloudy; low upper

20s; winds southwest 10-20 mph.

Tomorrow: Partly sunny; dry; high 55-

60; winds west 10-20 mph; low 15.

### Extended Forecast

Thursday through Saturday.

Thursday: dry; high 45-50; low 15.

Friday: dry; high 55-60; low 15-20.

Saturday: dry; high 60-65; low 25-30.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

## local markets

### Noon

Wheat — \$2.17 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.96

Loan deficiency payment — 49¢

Corn — \$1.63 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.74

Loan deficiency payment — 25¢

Milo — \$2.45 hundredweight

Soybeans — \$3.97 bushel

Posted county price — \$3.99

Loan deficiency payment — 90¢

Millet — \$3.80 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$5.95 cwt.

Loan deficiency prmt. — \$3.95

Confection current — \$13/\$8 cwt.

Pinto beans — \$13 (new crop)

(Markets provided by Mueller Grain, Sigco

Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op and Prairie Pea

and Bean. These may not be closing figures.)

## afternoon wire

Late news  
from the  
Associated  
Press

1 p.m.

## Deputy says sheriff knew

TOPEKA — A Shawnee County sheriff's deputy testified today that Sheriff Dave Meneley told him in 1995 he knew that another deputy used drugs.

Deputy Phil Blume was the first witness at a preliminary hearing in Shawnee County District Court on whether Meneley should stand trial on two felony charges of perjury.

The charges stem from Meneley's testimony at two hearings last year he had been unaware of Deputy Timothy Oblander's cocaine use until Oblander disclosed it publicly. Shawnee County District Attorney Joan Hamilton filed the perjury charges.

Under questioning today by Assistant District Attorney Tony Ruess, Blume testified that in July 1995, Meneley told him that Oblander had a drug addiction and had taken drugs that he had bought during undercover investigations.

# Governor's message upbeat, but money gloomy

TOPEKA (AP) — His budget proposals contained plenty of gloomy news, but Gov. Bill Graves laced his State of the State address with upbeat messages.

Legislators expect the 90-day legislative session to be relatively difficult because of the state's budget problems. Graves himself is proposing cuts in some agencies' budgets.

During a 27-minute speech Monday night, Graves said his administration and the Legislature have accomplished much since he took office in January 1995. He said the state does not face a crisis, only "a period when we need to control our spending."

"Government cannot make perfect the imperfections of society, but we can improve and enhance the quality of life for Kansans, and we have," he said.

Democrats didn't think the Republican governor's positive assessment

was warranted. House Minority Leader Jim Garner said Graves focused on the past because he was "about to embark on a future of unkept promises."

"From what I gather from the budget he's proposed, it's not a time for joyous celebration," said Garner, D-Coffeyville.

However, House Speaker Robin Jennison, R-Healy, said: "I think what we're going through here is healthy. ... We've just not had to set any priorities over the past four or five years."

Rep. Clay Aurand, R-Courtland, said Graves' budget reflects a "tinkering-around-the-edge year."

"There's not as much candy to give out this year," he said.

While most of his speech dealt with budget issues, Graves did outline other policy initiatives.

He said the Kansas Open Records Act needs to be strengthened to provide

"teeth in the enforcement process" and create an independent review of disputes between officials and the public.

Graves also proposed new ethics and campaign finance laws. He wants to make lobbyists disclose which individual legislators or officials receive free meals and drinks and require candidates to report campaign contributions made in the last days before an election.

In addition, the governor proposed toughening a law that requires motorists to use seat belts.

"We particularly need to protect our children when adults will not accept this responsibility," he said.

Graves proposed more than \$8.6 billion in spending for the state's 2001 fiscal year, which begins July 1. The increase would be about \$194 million, or 2.3 percent.

But legislators worry most about

spending from the general fund, the single largest source of money for Kansas government programs. The state ended fiscal 1999 on June 30 with \$73.4 million less than expected in general fund revenues.

Graves outlined a revised 2000 budget with \$67.4 million less in general fund spending than the Legislature approved last year. His 2001 budget increases general fund spending from that revised 2000 budget by only 0.8 percent, or \$36.7 million.

Some agencies will have their general fund appropriations cut significantly, most notably the Department of Transportation.

The amount of general fund dollars in KDOT's budget for fiscal 2001 would be \$38.9 million, or nearly 39 percent, less than the amount allocated for fiscal 2000 by the Legislature last year. Other sources make up the money make up for the loss, however.

"We took as much as we could without retreating from our strong commitment to a new transportation plan," Graves said, referring to the \$12.9 billion, 10-year plan approved last year.

In past years, the state cut taxes significantly. Some officials have suggested in recent months that Graves and legislators acted too hastily.

Senate President Dick Bond, R-Overland Park, said Monday he will propose a sales tax increase to raise money for state programs.

But in his address, Graves said: "Tax increases are not acceptable substitutes for fiscal management."

Bond replied that a tax increase is inevitable.

"It's all a question of when's the right time," he said.

Graves' proposed budget for the state's 2001 fiscal year includes the full \$21.2 million legislators promised last year when they reorganized the state's higher education system.

He also proposed spending \$17.3 million to expand state prisons in El Dorado and Topeka.

In addition, his recommendations include extra money for services designed to keep the elderly and disabled in their homes and out of nursing homes.

However, Graves did not commit to ending waiting lists for such services.

The governor proposed extra money for public elementary, junior high and high schools, but not as much as legislators promised during their 1999 session.

Graves wants to increase school budgets by \$37 for each student during the current academic year and another \$50 for the 2000-01 year. Last year, the Legislature committed to increases of \$50 for each year.

Graves' budget recommendations are available on the Internet at <http://www.da.state.ks.us/budget>.

## Senate debates revised budget

TOPEKA (AP) — Senators weren't planning on wasting any time in taking up proposed changes in the current state budget, and they could reject the key recommendation on education spending from Gov. Bill Graves.

A budget debate was scheduled to begin the day after the Legislature convened its annual session and met in joint session for Graves' State of the State address.

Pending was a bill drafted by the Senate Ways and Means Committee that would make dozens of changes in the state's budget for its 2000 fiscal year, which ends June 30.

Graves proposed his own changes, including one to pare spending on public elementary, junior high and high schools.

Last year, legislators approved an increase in public school budgets of \$50 for each student for their current academic year and another \$50 increase for the 2000-01 academic year.

In the face of budget problems, Graves proposed trimming this year's increase back to \$37 per student but still providing the full \$50-per-student increase for the next school year.

The Senate committee rejected that proposal, keeping the full \$50-per-student increase for the current school year. Some members suggested the increase next year might not be \$50, but others want to keep the 1999 Legislature's promise and take money from other programs.

The 1999 Legislature increased the

per-pupil budget for public schools from \$3,720 for the 1998-99 school year to \$3,770 for 1999-2000, then \$3,820 in 2000-01. Under Graves' plan, the new figures would be \$3,757 and 3,807, respectively.

The net effect of all the budget changes in the Senate bill would be to cut the amount of general fund spending approved by legislators last year by \$64 million, or about 1.4 percent. The general fund is the largest source of money for Kansas government programs and where the state deposits most of its tax revenue.

Graves proposed \$67.4 million worth of cuts, and most of them were endorsed by the Ways and Means Committee.

Republican legislative leaders want to move quickly on the proposed changes in the fiscal 2000 budget.

"The principle job of the Legislature is the 2001 budget. It's impossible to do the 2001 budget until we resolve the issues in the 2000 budget," said Senate President Dick Bond, R-Overland Park.

In the House, consideration of changes in the current budget is being delayed by some members' desire to cancel the presidential primary.

Graves has proposed spending \$1.5 million to cover the cost of the election, but the House Appropriations Committee deleted the money. Speaker Robin Jennison, R-Healy, said this week the House may debate a bill canceling the election.

## Caruso bridge nears completion



Despite the colder temperatures workers are preparing the new Caruso bridge for the pouring of the railings later this week. Julia Duvall used a crow bar to make sure the rebar is straight for the south railing. The deck for the new bridge was poured in December. With the pouring of the railings and the approaches in the next week nearly all of the construction phase of the bridge will be completed. However, that does not mean it will be ready for traffic very soon as there is some dirt work on the ends which remains to be done, and the weather has to warm up before the asphalt can be laid down. The bridge is expected to be opened to traffic sometime in March, depending on when the road can be replaced.

Photo by Tom Betz / The Goodland Daily News

# School board approves on-line virtual course policy

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Daily News

Beginning the second semester students at Goodland High School may be able to take one of their courses on-line through Virtual Greenbush/Goodland course resources after the Goodland School Board approved the outline of a district policy at Monday's regular meeting.

Superintendent Marvin Selby told the board he would like to give the on-line course system a try, and that it would be limited to those students who are approved by High School Principal Harvey Swager.

Board member Ben Duell made the motion to allow high school students to enroll in virtual Greenbush classes with the recommendation of the high school principal, and to allow approximately \$3,000 to be dedicated to this program. The motion was seconded by board member Mike Campbell, and passed 7-0.

Selby said the students would have to apply for the courses through the principal, and that the \$3,000 would allow about 10 students to participate. "We are not going to let students take these courses unless the principal is

fairly certain they will complete the course," Selby said. "There are about 30 courses available through this program, and we will not have any other expense other than the tuition for those who actually enroll in a course."

Enrollment cost for each course is about \$400, Selby said, and while the district will be responsible for the tuition of those who are approved by the principal, it is possible for students to take courses if they pay the full tuition cost for the course.

The Virtual On-Line classes are now available, and Selby said he would report back to the board on the program following the end of the semester.

Internet research may get a boost this spring as the board approved allowing Selby to contact Zapme about their supplying up to 15 free Internet-ready computers to the district.

District Technology person Karla Murray said she had investigated the Zapme program and thought it was something which the district could benefit from. She said the school librarians at both the high school and intermediate levels felt the computers would be helpful.

Under the proposal Zapme would provide the district with 15 Internet-

ready Dell computers with five each at Goodland high school, Grant junior high and North elementary. The computers will be connected to a satellite dish which is also provided by Zapme, Murray said.

The program does have a catch in that the computers are to be accessible at least four hours a day, and there will be advertising from Zapme which will appear in the bottom corner of the screen. It is through the advertising that Zapme can offer the systems to schools, Selby said.

Both Murray and Selby said the librarians are interested in the program to give them additional computers which are connected to the Internet. Murray said she had talked to a person at Topeka high school which started using the computers in March. She said they reported having some technical support problems in the beginning, but that the person is more satisfied with how the system is working this year.

Board member Gerald Franklin made the motion to allow the district to participate in the Zapme program. Board member Eric Gray seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

Under the superintendent's report Selby gave an update on the Max Jones

Fieldhouse expansion, and suggested that it would be good to have members of the staffs of the various buildings tour the facility as it is nearing completion.

He said the gym is moving ahead and that all the lights are now installed. The floor is expected to be delivered in the next couple of weeks, and is to be installed after it has set in the building for a week to be acclimatized.

The lockers are to be installed as soon as the painting is completed which Selby said should be by the end of this week or next week. He said the painter is expected on Wednesday.

Gary Gregory, head of the district insurance committee, talked to the board about the advantages and disadvantages of the district moving to the Kansas State insurance plan. Until last year, school districts were not eligible to participate in the state plan, but that was changed and the insurance committee has been looking at the differences between the current insurance plan and the state plan.

Gregory said the district should not have a problem meeting the requirements for participation in the plan, but that there would be some higher costs under the state plan. Currently, the dis-

trict pays 100 percent of the individual employee's insurance cost, but under the state plan the district would also have to pay a minimum of 35 percent of the insurance for the spouse, children or family if the employee wants to add them.

One advantage Gregory mentioned was that the state plan provides a good dental plan for employees, and that it would make the district insurance package comparable to other employers in the area. The plan also has optional vision coverage which would be available on an individual basis.

Selby said while the district does not have to change to the state plan at this time it is something he feels should be examined. "I think making such a change could be of real benefit to our employees," he said.

The board went into executive session to discuss personnel and to talk to the building principals from the high school, junior high and North elementary. When they returned to open session, resignations were accepted from Lorie Abbey, a STEPlab aide, and Mary Jo Miles, a paraprofessional at North.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 p.m. The next meeting will be 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 24.